

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENNA 01220 121531Z

47

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FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4784

INFO AMEMBASSY BERN IMMEDIATE

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UNCLAS VIENNA 1220

DEPARTMENT FOR BRUCE FLATIN EUR/CE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, AU

SUBJECT: AUSTRIAN MEDIA COVERAGE OF "AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE
DOMINICK STORY"

REF: VIENNA 1200

1. SUMMARY: AUSTRIA'S TWO LARGEST PROVINCIAL NEWSPAPERS, THE LINZ
"OBEROESTERREICHISCHE NACHRICHTEN" AND THE GRAZ
"KLEINE ZEITUNG," BOTH CARRIED STORY ON AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE
DOMINICK IN FEBURARY 12 EDITIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. "OBEROESTERREICHISCHE NACHRICHTEN" GIVES STORY FRONT PAGE
UNDER HEADLINE IN RED PRINT: "U.S. AMBASSADOR SHOCKS SWIT-
ZERLAND; HE DEMANDS BREAK IN NEUTRALITY." FOLLOWING IS FULL
TEXT OF BERN DATELINED STORY:

" THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE TO SWITZERLAND, PETER
DOMINICK, HAS CUASED QUITE A STIR EVEN BEFORE ENTERING OFFICE.
IN AN INTERVIEW WITH SWISS JOURNALISTS HE MADE CLEAR THAT HE
SEES ONE OF HIS MAJOR TASKS TO BE PROMPTING SWITZERLAND TO
VIOLATE ITS NEUTRALITY. CONCRETELY: IF 'SOMETHING HAPPENS IN THE
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MIDDLE EAST,' DOMINICK WANTS TO GET FOR THE U.S. AIR FORCE THE

RIGHT TO OVERFLY SWITZERLAND. AS THE AMBASSADOR ALSO ASSERTED, THERE HAVE ALREADY BEEN CONTACTS BETWEEN AMERICAN AND SWISS MILITARY LEADERS ON THIS ISSUE.

"DOMINICK ALSO SAID THAT A (SWISS) FEDERAL PRESIDENT TOOK PART IN THESE FIRST CONTACTS. DEFENSE MINISTER GNAEGI WAS FEDERAL PRESIDENT IN 1974.

"MEANWHILE, THE AMERICAN DEPARTMENT OF STATE HAS DENIED THE STATEMENT: 'WE DID NOT HAVE AND DO NOT HAVE THE INTENTION TO OVERFLY SWITZERLAND FOR THE PURPOSE OF TRANSPORTING WAR MATERIAL.' THE U.S. EMBASSY IN BERN SAID EVASIVELY THAT DOMINICK'S STATEMENTS 'MAY BE A MISUNDERSTANDING.' WE AUSTRIANS IN PARTICULAR KNOW, HOWEVER, ABOUT PRECEDENTS OF SUCH VIOLATIONS OF NEUTRALITY BOTH BY THE AMERICAN AND THE SOVIET SIDE. DURING THE LEBANON CRISIS IN 1958, THE U.S. AIR FORCE CROSSED AUSTRIA AND, DURING THE CRISIS OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA IN AUGUST 1968, SOVIET COMBAT PLANES WERE UNINVITED GUESTS IN AUSTRIA'S AIR SPACE.

"DOMINICK'S UTTERANCES ALSO CALL ATTENTION TO THE VERY DOUBTFUL PROCESS OF SELECTION FOR THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES. IN ELECTIONS IN THE FALL OF 1974, DOMINICK HAD LOST HIS SENATE OFFICE, AND HE WAS GIVEN THE POST OF AMBASSADOR AS A CONSOLATION. IT HAS BEEN THE PRACTICE IN THE UNITED STATES TO GIVE AMBASSADORSHIPS TO POLITICIANS WHO HAVE DONE SERVICES TO THE PARTY AND/OR TO THOSE WHO MADE LARGE CAMPAIGN DONATIONS." (END TEXT)

3. "KLEINE ZEITUNG" STORY, UNDER HEADLINE "SWITZERLAND INDIGNANT: U.S. AIR FORCE WANTS RIGHT TO OVERFLY" ON PAGE FIVE, IS CONDENSED VERSION OF AP STORY, SIMILAR TO "DIE PRESSE" ACCOUNT REPORTED IN REFTEL. HUMES

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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